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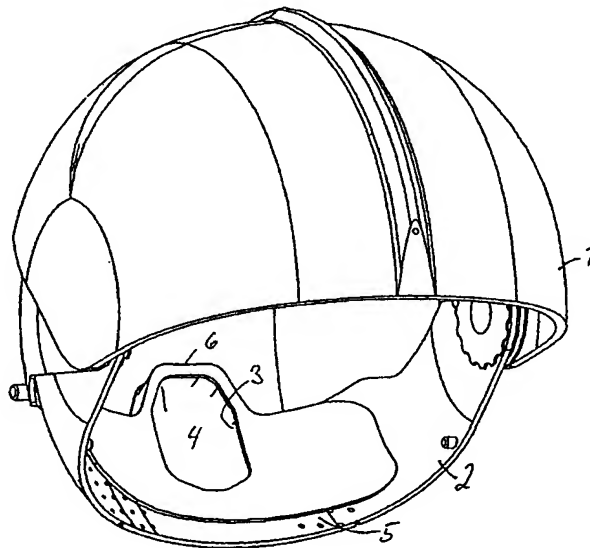
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: EXHALATION SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: An exhalation system is provided for a helmet or face mask, which helmet or face mask covers the whole or parts of the area of the face's exhalation organs, the nose and mouth, with a chin guard. The system is characterised in that the chin guard is provided with an internal closed cavity which has an opening towards the interior of the helmet or the face mask on the inside of the chin guard and an additional opening towards the outside of the chin guard. The opening towards the interior of the helmet is relatively large and is in the form of one large opening or a small number of large openings which offer the least possible resistance and maintain the velocity of the exhalation air in the best possible manner.

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*For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*

### Exhalation system

The present invention relates to an exhalation system for a helmet or face mask, which helmet or face mask covers the whole or parts of the area of the face's exhalation organs, nose and mouth.

5 People using helmets of various types or different kinds of face masks, particularly with visors or goggles, are familiar with the problems that arise when exhaled air from the person's exhalation organs such as the nose or mouth causes misting on glasses or visors together with a raised level of CO<sub>2</sub> in the immediate vicinity of the area where the person breathes in. This makes it difficult to see and reduces  
10 visibility while at the same time a person who is physically active may experience increased levels of CO<sub>2</sub> as a problem leading to a reduced state of alertness, nausea, dizziness and at worst a loss of consciousness. Exhalation in a closed helmet, moreover, creates unpleasant conditions with regard to odour, etc. inside the helmet.

The problem applies to motorcycle helmets and helmets for use by soldiers, police  
15 and security personnel, when the helmet covers the mouth and/or nose and particularly when the helmet has a visor or goggles. Such helmets are less able to replace air from the area round the nose/mouth.

A number of face masks are also employed which, in combination with a visor or goggles, create a space round the face which covers nose and mouth, thereby  
20 creating the same situation.

A number of helmets and face masks therefore have a perforated or otherwise partly open area at the nose and mouth to permit the escape of exhaled air. The problem, however, is that such perforated areas have relatively strong resistance and whilst the problem of moist exhaled air (which causes misting) may perhaps be solved  
25 since the exhaled air is mixed with and cooled by fresh air in front of the openings, there will be very little effect on problems with a raised concentration of CO<sub>2</sub>, since the resistance is too great to permit this gas to be removed.

Nor is it desirable to have a large opening in the protection round nose and mouth offered by a helmet or face mask. This is due to several factors, such as deficient  
30 protection (in the case of a motorcycle helmet, for example), unfavourable wind and weather conditions, particularly at high speed where snow and rain, etc. penetrate right into the person's breathing organ. This also results in a substantial reduction in comfort. When the air outside the helmet moves at a velocity against the helmet that is greater than the velocity of the air exhaled from nose or mouth, moreover,  
35 exhaled air will not be removed to a noticeable extent, but only attenuated in the nose or mouth region.

A number of solutions may also be envisaged where excess pressure is created in the helmet in order to assist in removing used air while simultaneously drawing in fresh air. Such systems, however, are expensive and technically sophisticated, with the result that they are also vulnerable.

5 As a rule the problem is how to expel the exhaled air while avoiding having an excessively large opening out of the mouthpiece/nosepiece which also acts as an entry point for moisture, etc. In addition it is important to carry exhaled air away from the area immediately round the nose and mouth since the inhalation air is drawn from this nearby area and there is a risk of exhaled CO<sub>2</sub>-rich air being  
10 breathed back in.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a system for use in helmets or face masks covering the nose/mouth, which system permits the free passage of exhaled gases away from the face only by means of the natural velocity of the gases out of the nose or mouth. It is a further object to provide a system  
15 which can easily be adapted to the different helmets and face masks and which does not come into conflict with padding, the ability to tilt up a chin guard or the like.

Thus, based on the above-mentioned objects, an exhalation system is provided for a helmet or face mask, which helmet or face mask covers the whole or parts of the area of the face's exhalation organs, the nose and mouth, with a chin guard. The  
20 system is characterised in that the chin guard is provided with an internal closed cavity which has an opening towards the interior of the helmet or the face mask on the inside of the chin guard and an additional opening towards the outside of the chin guard. The opening towards the interior of the helmet is relatively large and is in the form of one large opening or a small number of large openings which offer  
25 the least possible resistance and which maintain the velocity of the exhalation air in the best possible manner.

In an alternative embodiment the chin guard is composed of two parallel plates with an intermediate cavity where the cavity is airtight at the upper edge, thus preventing exhaled air from moving up from the cavity (it is a well-known fact that hot air  
30 rises).

In a further embodiment the cavity in the chin guard has an opening in the lower edge of the chin guard for venting exhaled air. This provides amongst other advantages a short ventilation path.

In yet another embodiment the venting of exhaled air can be implemented, for  
35 example, on the side of the chin guard through one or more openings. This embodiment has the added advantage that a slight negative pressure can be created on the sides which helps to "suck" out exhaled air when, for example, the air is moving past the exterior of the helmet at high speed.

In an alternative embodiment a respirator may be connected to the helmet, with the result that inhaled air is first purified or an excess pressure of "clean" air is established inside the helmet. In connection with the exhalation system, a respirator of this kind can be connected to the cavity in the chin guard. However, such a  
5 solution requires a good seal round the neck and back of the head as well as in the remaining parts of the helmet.

An example of a helmet with chin guard and exhalation system according to the present invention is further illustrated in figure 1. A helmet 1 is illustrated here in perspective from behind and partly below with a chin guard 2. The chin guard 2 also  
10 has a raised portion 6 at the exhalation organs, which is preferred in order to capture as much of the exhaled air as possible.

The chin guard 2 is further provided with a cavity 3 at the front edge with a large opening 4 from the inside of the helmet towards the cavity 3. The cavity 3 is airtight along its outer edge except for an opening 5 at the bottom where the exhaled air can  
15 be expelled freely.

The inhalation takes place in the immediate vicinity of the nose and mouth and will therefore not be affected to a noticeable extent by the exhaled air that has passed to the outside of the bottom of the helmet. If there is a relative difference in velocity between the helmet and the surrounding air, moreover, exhaled air which is passed  
20 down on the bottom of the chin guard will blow away or be attenuated.

The opening 4 into the cavity 3 is adapted in size and shape in order to maintain the natural velocity of the exhaled air and this air is then diverted from the immediate , vicinity of the breathing organs.

## PATENT CLAIMS

1. An exhalation system for a helmet or face mask, which helmet or face mask covers the whole or parts of the area of the face's exhalation organs, the nose and mouth, with a chin guard,  
5 characterised in that the chin guard is provided with an internal closed cavity which has at least one opening towards the interior of the helmet or the face mask on the inside of the chin guard and that the cavity is further provided with one or more openings towards the outside of the chin guard.
2. An exhalation system according to claim 1,  
10 characterised in that chin guard consists of two parallel plates with an intermediate cavity and that the cavity is airtight at the upper edge.
3. An exhalation system according to claims 1-2,  
characterised in that the cavity in the chin guard has an opening in the lower edge of the chin guard.
- 15 4. An exhalation system according to claims 1-3,  
characterised in that the cavity has one or more openings towards the outside of the chin guard, on the side of the chin guard.

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/NO 2003/000358

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC7: A43B 3/24 // A43B 3/28, A62B 18/08

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC7: A43B, A62B

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

SE,DK,FI,NO classes as above

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EPO-INTERNAL, WPI DATA, PAJ

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5758639 A (IKONEN), 2 June 1998 (02.06.1998) --	
A	US 4612675 A (BROERSMA), 23 Sept 1986 (23.09.1986) -- -----	

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☒ See patent family annex.

\* Special categories of cited documents:

- "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
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- "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

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"X" document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

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"&" document member of the same patent family

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**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

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US	5758639	A	02/06/1998	DE	69318167	D,T	22/10/1998
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